

Sci. STKE, Vol. 2003, Issue 211, pp. tw467, 2 December 2003.
[DOI: 10.1126/stke.2112003tw467]

PHAGOCYTOSIS:
Molecular Dinner Invitations

Apoptotic cells undergoing programmed cell death are potentially harmful, and normally, they are removed by phagocytes that engulf the dying cells. The phagocytes are thought to recognize the apoptotic cells by the presence of phosphatidylserine in the outer leaflet of the plasma membrane. Two reports show that animals lacking phosphatidylserine receptors have defects in the engulfment of cell corpses (see the Perspective by Savill *et al.*). Wang *et al.* show that in the nematode worm, *Caenorhabditis elegans*, the phosphatidylserine receptor appears to interact with one of two known signaling pathways that lead to the removal of cell corpses during development. Li *et al.* show that mice lacking the receptor have defects in development of the lung and brain caused by accumulated dead cells.

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